THE NEW GHOST

ROBERT HUNTER

NOBROW

IF ROB HUNTER WAS A GHOST, HE WOULD BE A FRIENDLY, UNOBTRUSIVE ONE WITH SMALL EARS AND A SHIMMERING BLUE GLOW. HE WOULD SPEND HIS DAYS QUIETLY AND PRODUCTIVELY DESIGNING AND ILLUSTRATING BOOKS, MAKING FILMS AND WRITING STORIES - BUT AT NIGHT HE WOULD FLOAT ABOVE HOUSES TURNING OCCASIONAL SOMERSAULTS IN THE BREEZE, SEEN ONLY BY CATS AND DOGS.

SPECIAL THANKS TO MA, PA, RICHARD AND ELIZABETH HUNTER AND TO ALEX AND SAM FOR LETTING ME TELL A STORY.

DEDICATED TO THOMAS AND NELLIE HUNTER

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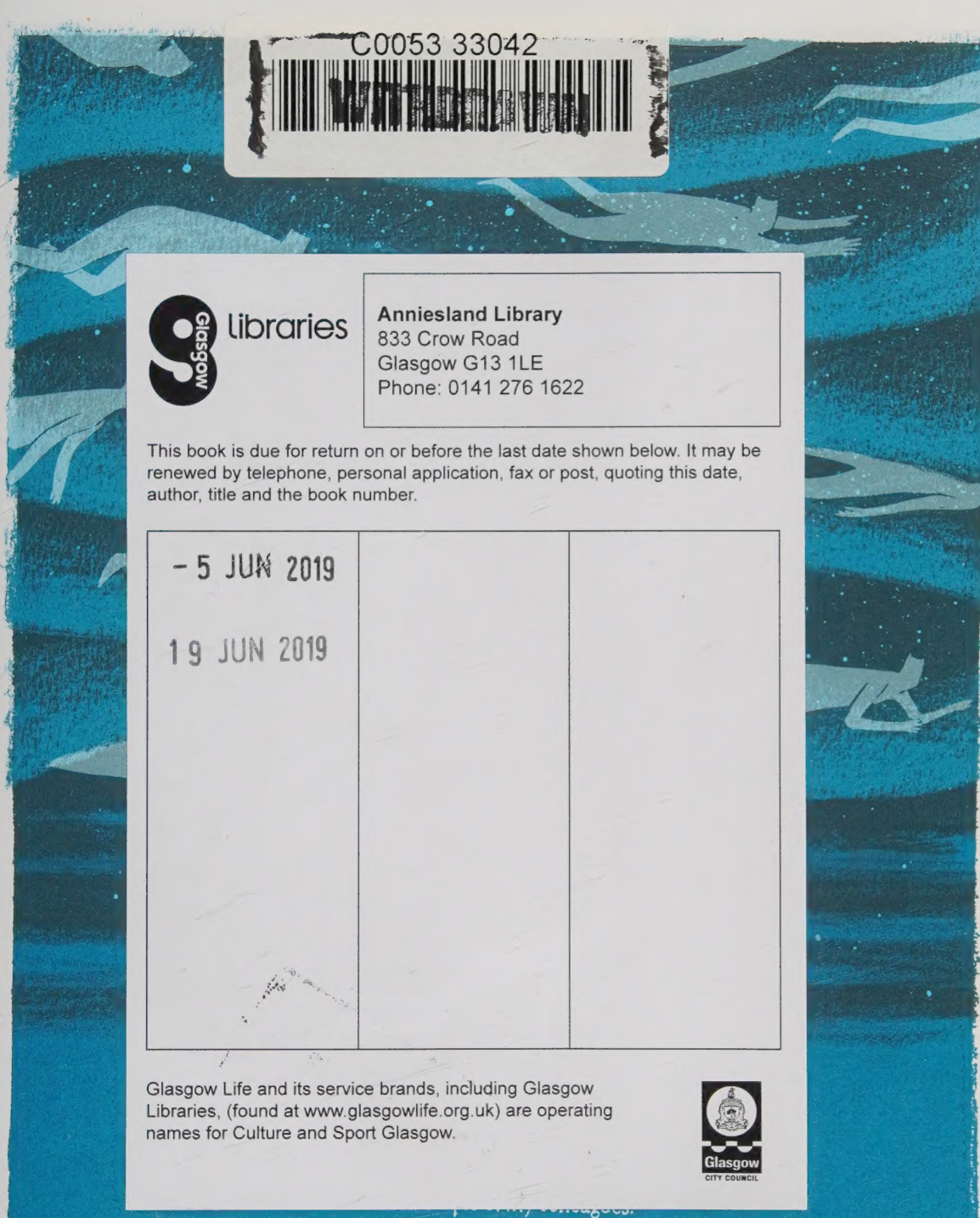

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Their speed and elegance in flight was difficult to mimic.
I was the last of the group to make my way down to the trees.
I decided to catch up by passing through objects, rather than dodging them.
My technique left much to be desired and I fell behind.

In the distance I saw my colleagues pass over a dome-shaped structure.
It produced mechanical sounds while the top half rotated.
In the center was a mirrored disc that now faced me.
The sounds of the structure stopped and I started to notice movement.
When a figure appeared I guessed that my crash had not gone unnoticed.

I started my departure, but the thickness of the tree had a heavy resistance.

With difficulty I freed myself and fell into full view of the figure.

Standing above me, the figure expressed concern having seen the crash.

He explained that he viewed the whole event through a telescope.

I was helped to my feet and invited inside to rest.

As we walked I searched the sky in the hope of spotting the group again.

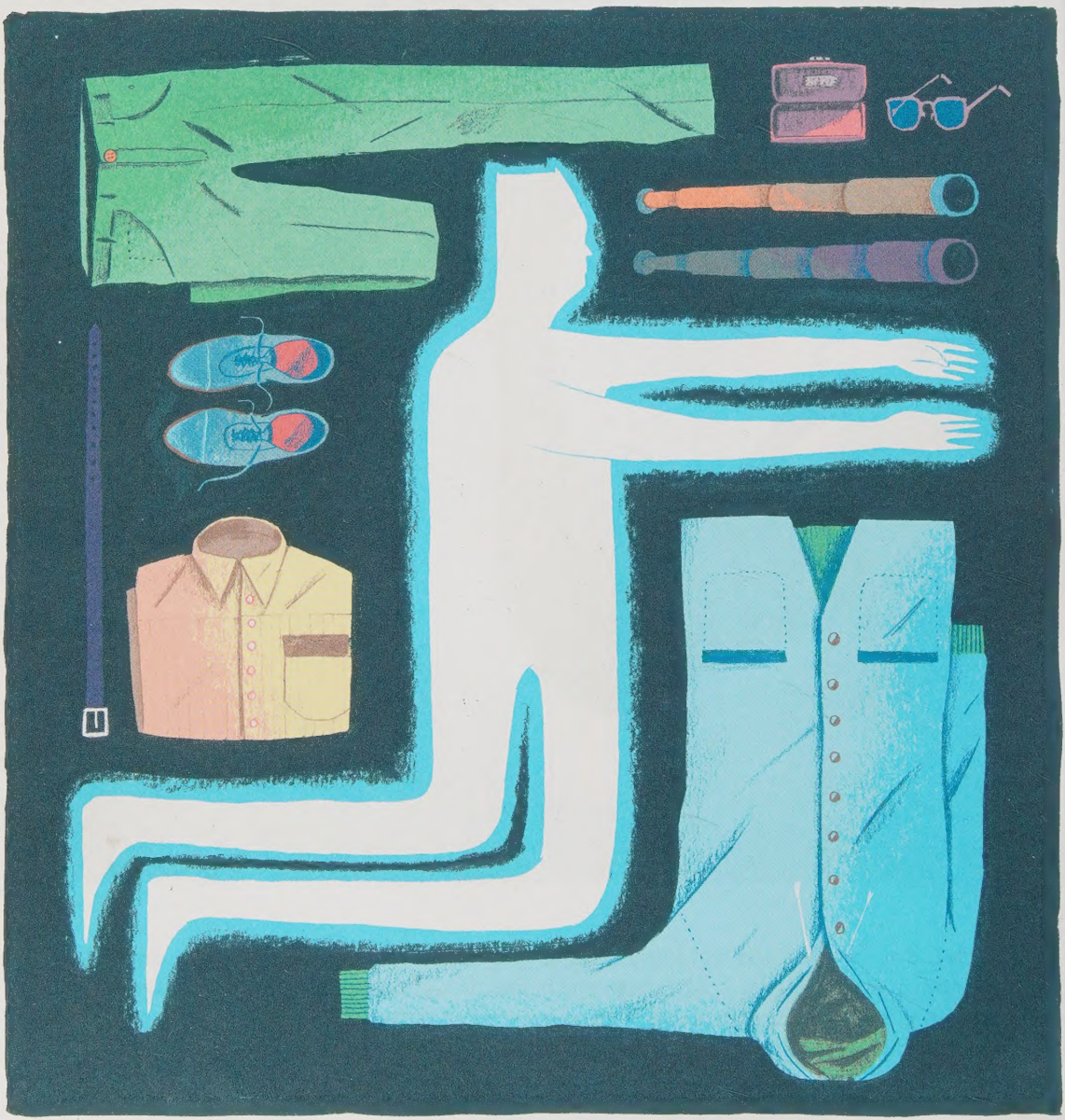
I was unsure if this encounter would be encouraged by my colleagues.

But I was already lost and any help offered could be useful.

Once inside, I could see that the figure was a man. He explained that he was watching the stars through the telescope when my group and I flew past. I learned that the man's work was to look through the telescope and study the stars all night, leaving his days to rest. He hoped to one day discover a new star, learn how it was born and have the work presented and published.

I made it clear that I was lost and that I needed to catch up with my group. Unsure about my task, or the activities of my colleagues, I didn't have much direction. The man had a few vague suggestions about "haunting" but I was sure there was more to my work than that. The man kindly offered his help and equipment but insisted I wear a daytime disguise.

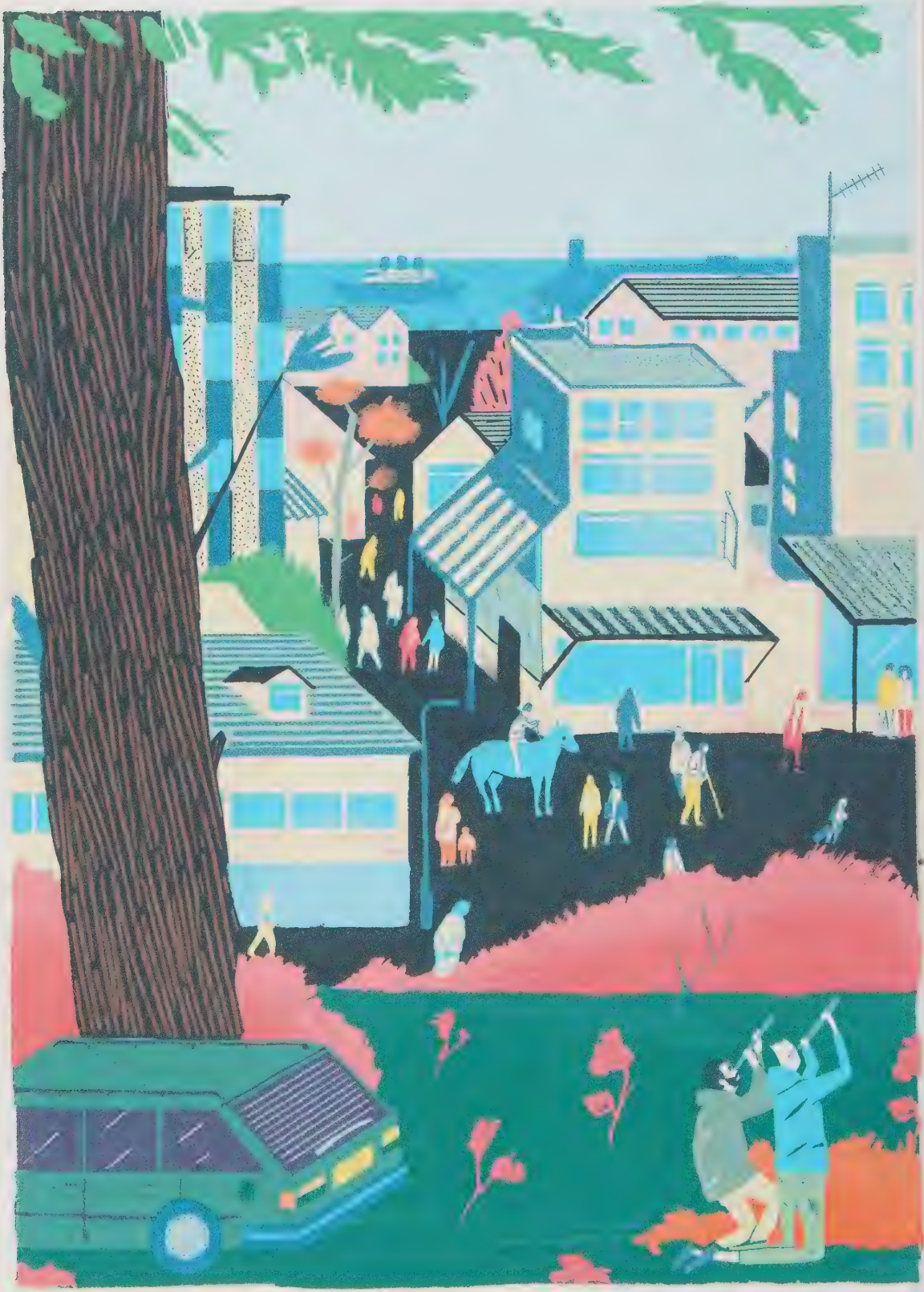
As the morning light set in, the man began collecting spare clothing and portable telescopes for the search.

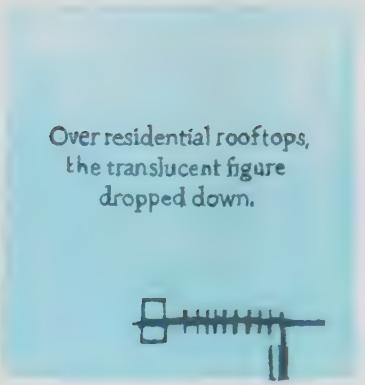


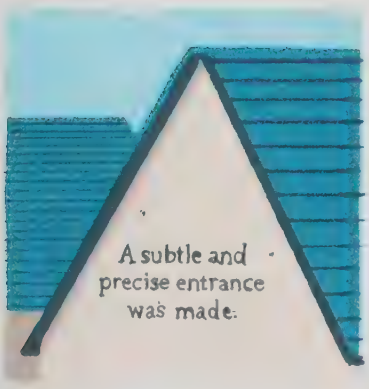
As we looked, the man pointed out areas of town he enjoyed most.

I started to doubt his concentration until he noticed a flying figure.

As I aligned the telescope, I decided to observe my colleague to get an understanding of my purpose.

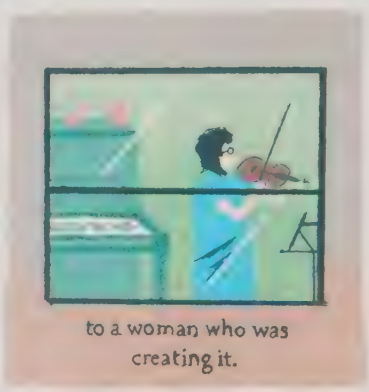



Over residential rooftops,
the translucent figure
dropped down.


A subtle and
precise entrance
was made.

I could faintly hear music
from the open window.

The sound seemed to attract
my colleague closer


to a woman who was
creating it.

Guiding the woman outside, the music became louder, with an additional part played by my colleague.

I was unsure at what point the man ran away.
I was fixed on the remains of the encounter,
having lost sight of the woman.

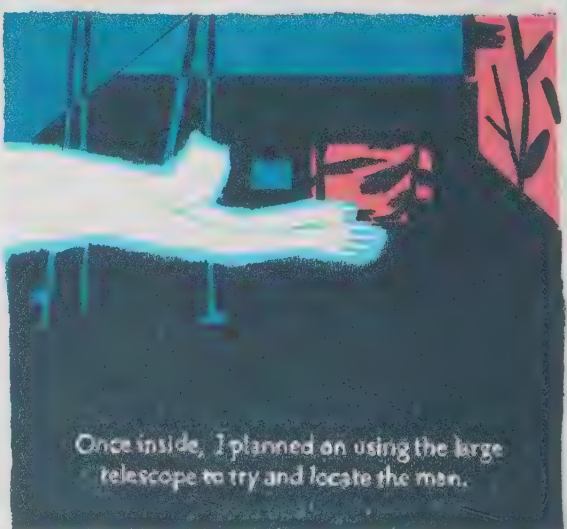
I felt uneasy about the example
I had just witnessed and was
reluctant to follow it.

I followed the tracks.
I wanted to find the man
and speak to him.

Explain that I was no danger
to him.

Losing the trail, I noticed
a familiar structure
through the trees.

With no sight of the man or his vehicle I slowly
entered the building.


Once inside, I planned on using the large
telescope to try and locate the man.

Changing the direction of the telescope, my view was often obscured by the surrounding trees. I had almost viewed a full rotation when I noticed a broken instrument.

I aimed the telescope above the instrument in the direction the woman had been last seen.

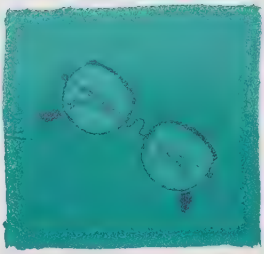
As I did so I was distracted by a star shining brilliantly.

I greatly admired the man's work and thought it was a much more appealing job. Attached to the viewfinder was a handwritten list of co-ordinates. One set was labelled "home," so I adjusted the dials.

I retrieved part of my disguise
to arrive with a familiar face
During my flight I saw clouds in the distance.
Clouds that had an unusual movement.

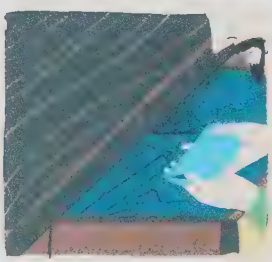
I picked an easy surface to make a quick entrance
and found the man asleep at his desk

As soon as the man awoke, I started apologising before he had time to react.



By the time I was explaining my new interest in stars, I had gained his attention.

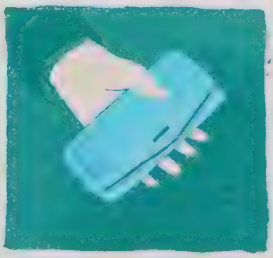
My carelessness with the man's possession had allowed me to be tracked.



I apologised again for the threat I had now brought to his home.

He invited me to work with him to help explore the birth of stars.

I gladly accepted but the walls were reaching in and we had to leave.



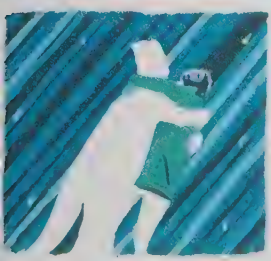
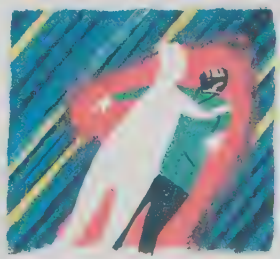
The man handed me something to mark my first day on the job.

A gift of a new set for the beginning of a new profession.

I was moved by the man's new trust in me. I wanted to do my best to help him.

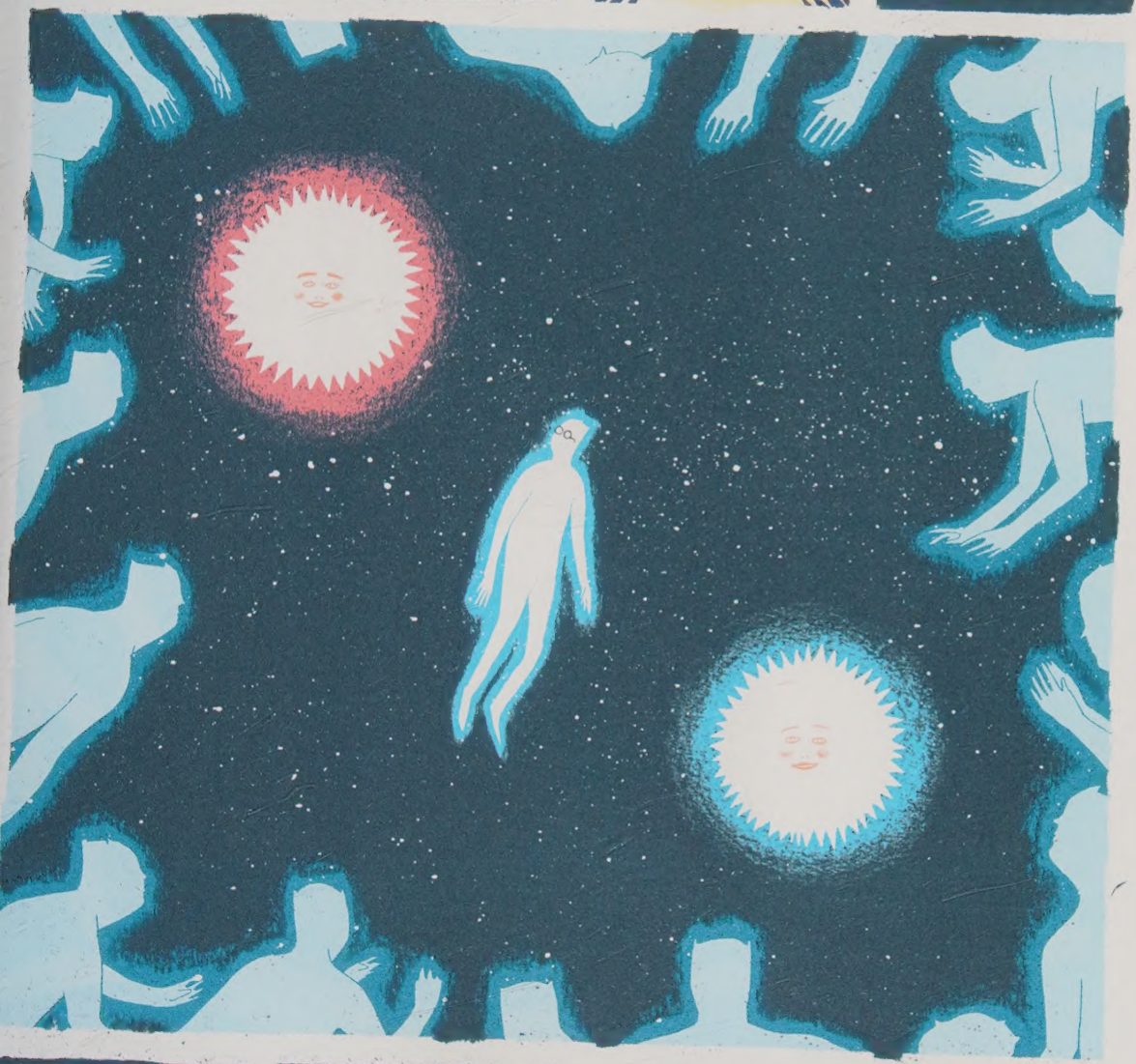
I felt more confident and decided on a new direction for our escape.

The man laughed with excitement at the approaching heavens.

I didn't know what I had done. The man had gone and I was with two stars.

As I looked closer I could faintly make out the man's smiling face.



In the second star was the face of the woman who played the music.

My colleagues congratulated me on a job well done.

until then they would have to wait and see.

New Stars Thom and Nellie

Last night a town local discovered two new stars. The stars have been named Thom and Nellie and are set to be registered and published in the next editions of astronomical catalogues.

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